(c) whether Government propose to grant the foreign educational institutions the freedom to determine salaries of the faculty and staff and fixing fees, outside the purview of the UGC?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Government has vide Press Note 2 (2000 Series) dated 11-2-2000 allowed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) up to 100% on the automatic route in the education sector.

(c) A proposal for the regulation of entry and operation, maintenance of quality and prevention of commercialisation of education by Foreign Educational Institutions in Higher Education is currently under consideration of the Government.

**Engagement of foreign workers in SEZs**

1508. SHRI B.K. HARIPRASAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether many of the newly upcoming SEZ projects face teething problems in engaging foreign workers;

(b) whether many visa applications from Sri Lankan, Taiwanese and Chinese workers/technicians are held up for clearance in the Ministries of Home Affairs and External Affairs; and

(c) whether such delays in the issue of visa for workers and technicians from abroad will have adverse impact on foreign companies, with huge investment plans in the SEZs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) There was only one request from a unit under the Madras Special Economic Zone seeking intervention for grant of visa to recruitment of foreign technicians from Sri Lanka. Necessary clearance in this regard was given by the Ministry of External Affairs.

(c) No Sir. No undue delay in issuance of visa has come to the notice.

**Import of vanaspati from Sri Lanka**

1509. SHRIMATI BRINDA KARAT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are importing vanaspati from Sri Lanka; and

(b) if so, the reasons therefor and the details of quantity imported during the last three years, year-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH): (a) and (b) Vanaspati can be imported duty free from Sri Lanka under the India-Sri Lanka Free Trade Agreement. However, Government has fixed a Tariff Rate Quota of 2.50 Lakh Metric Tonnes per year to check adverse impact on Indian Vanaspati Industry.

The details of vanaspati imported from Sri Lanka into India during the last three years are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| 2004 | 10522.98 (MT) |
| 2005 | 170573.11 (MT) |
| 2006 (April-July) | 103706.02 (MT) |

(Source: HCI, Colombo)

**Problems of Indian Business in acquiring companies abroad**

1510. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:
SHRI HARISH RAWAT:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a view of the impediments faced by Indian business due to non-economic considerations in acquiring companies abroad, particularly in Europe;

(b) if so, the details of Government's assessment and if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government have raised the issue at appropriate fora;

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(e) whether our Missions in the respective countries are mandated to fake up such issues with the local Government; and